

The first part of the nature of a Woman.

*Fitly described in a Florentine
Historie*

Composed by C. M.



L O N D O N

*Printed by Valentine Simmes, for
Clement Knight, and are to be sold
at his shop at the little North
doore of Paules.*

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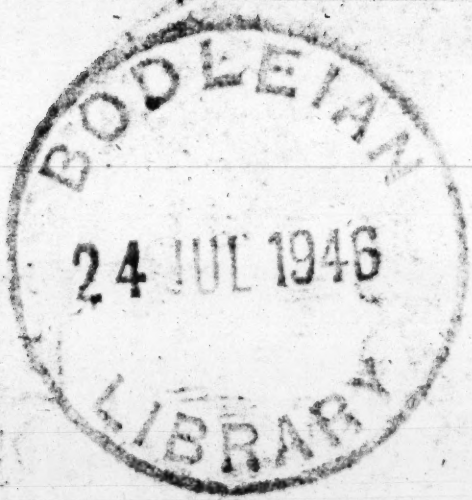
The first part of the

manuscript

contains a list of names

and places

Copy C.M.



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*To my very good friend Maister
T. A. Gentleman of the middle
Temple.*



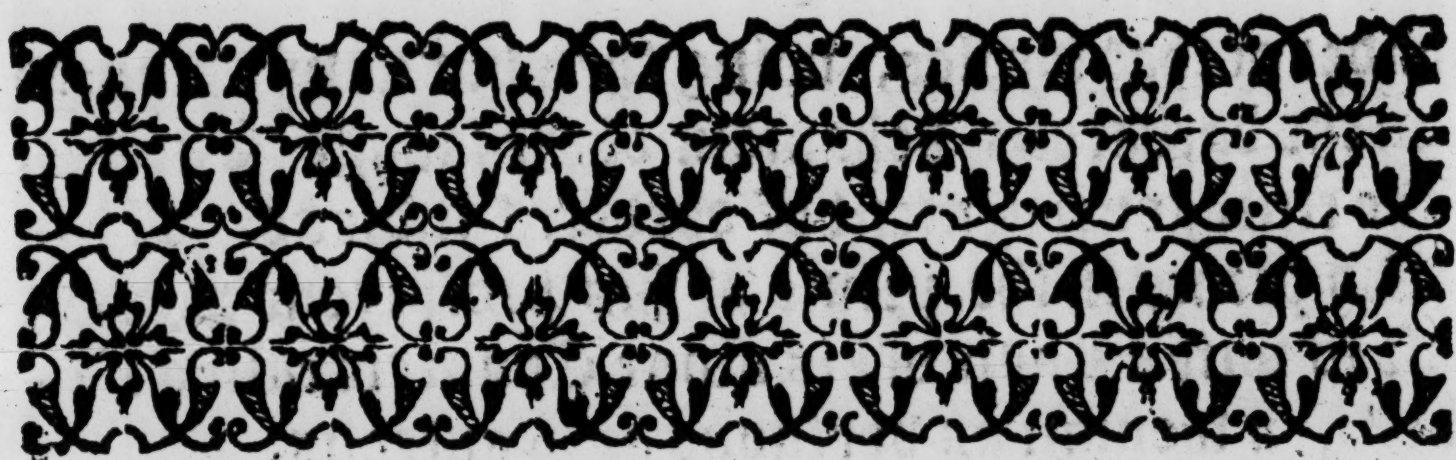
I R, the Authour of
this Booke, willing
to shrowde his vn-
perfect worke, vn-
der the couert of
some suche well minded Gentle-
man, that might defend it from the
greedy gripe of such bolde-faced
bussards, as commonly vse to prey
vpon the workes of yong wits: and
of himselfe altogether vnprovid-
ed for that purpose, hath entreated
mee to make some meanes for his
helpe herein : at whose instant re-
quest, I haue presumed to commit

The Epistle dedicatorie.

to your selfe, this vnperfect worke:
which, please it you but to accept,
in part of payment, for that debt of
duetie, wherein I stand bound vn-
to you: it shal incourage me when
his idle houres shall better furnish
some more substantiall subiect, to
pleasure you with that: who now
am bolde to presume vppon your
patience with this. I cease: being, I
am that I am, and while I liue,
will liue, to loue
you.

Yours in all loue,

C.K.



The life and death of the old Duke

The first Chapter.



BEfore the many spacious parts
of the wide Romaine Empire,
had subiected themselves to the
gouernement of one principall
head, there liued in those parts
of Italy which nowe men call
Florence, a Duke named Ra-
dulpho, one whom nature had
beautified in euerie externall part of the bodie, and
wisdome adozned with all internall gifts of the mind,
who from the first spring of his happy birth, to the ripe
yeares of his hopefull age, so effectually prospered, as
that hee liued no lesse renowned for his worthe at-
chieuements abroade, then admired for his wise go-
uernment at home, being generally for them both ac-
counted the principall Peere that then that part of the
world did afford: So that as from the heart the begin-
ning of life proceedeth bigore to euerie seuerall or-
gan of the bodie: so from him as the fountaine of
matchlesse honour, dayly issued such Chrystal streams
of magnanimous behauour towards his foes, and
courteous humanitie to his friends, as made him the

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wonder

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wonder of that worlde, being then but newly reduced from the barbarous behauiour of the sauage Satires, to the ciuil gouernement of obedient subiects. This blessed prince in the prime of his prosperous yeares, chose to wife a Ladie of his owne Countrie called Dorabella, a woman as vertuous as beauteous, and as plentifully replenished with commendable behauiour, as gloriously adozned with matchlesse feature, so that it might be iudged howe gods and nature had in these two onely excēded themselves, in affozding none, whose loue might counteruail the matchlesse li-
niaments of that more then earthly creature, he onely excepted, nor any beautie of such power as to conquer his maiden affections, if she to that purpose had not especially bene selected. Many sunshine dayes full of blessings ouer their heads, and euerie yeare seemed to excēd another, in heaping still reuuing pleasures into their plentiful lappes, walling them rounde about with impregnable felicitie, that they might proudlie oppose themselves against the hardest brants of Fortunes extremitie. Amongest all which fauours one especially, not the least, though almost the last, was this, that at one birth, this worthe dutches brought into the worlde two male twins, the right patrons of their royal parents, whose comming was not a little welcom to the secure inhabitants of that very wel gouerned Dukedome. In that heauens and their happie starres had so effectually answered their longing hopes, in the issue of those louing princes. These ioyfull parents carefully foreseruing, that their forwarde childezen might answere their toward growth in commendable qualities, fitting such royall personages, thought it most conuenient, when the stealing houres of euer running time had made them able to conceiue the principals of learning and knowledge, to prouide
for

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for them such men of skill, as well in good letters, as arts and sciences, as also fit directers as might tutor their tender yeares, in the timely practise of such worthy exercises, as are best in esteeme with men of so high estate: which done, they spent the proces of their pleasant dayes, favoured of gods, and beloued of men, blessing that golden age wherein they liued, for that no former dayes had felt so fauourable aspects of smiling heauens, to eternish their memoire through all succeeding posterities, vntill the date of their smiling dayes gan to growe out, and the forerunners of ensuing death, gins to admonish them of the speedie ende of their so pleasant life, Whenas now the olde king, spending those pleasant houts in melancholy contemplation, as best fitting the humour of gray heades which he was wonted to ouerpasse in delightfull contentation, fitly agreeing with the vnripened thoughts of yong wits, calles to his drowping minde the fickle estate of this worldly felicity, of which men perswade themselves there is no certaintie, but this that is vncertaine, some sprouting like a summers flower, after the spring dew of a pleasant morning, proudly spreading the sweet leaues, to the warme beams of the comfortable Sunne, and when the heate of one day is ouerwozne, faintly decays, and blots the former shew as though it had neuer bene borne: alluding his former life to the pleasant trauaile of a waifaring man, that hauing ouerpasse a greut deale of the day wandering in a pleasant dale, at last must worke vp his way to the hie top of a wearie hil, from whose height he may againe looke at the overcome pleasures of his forerunners iourney. And thus sighing to himselfe often recites in his aged memoire, the pleasant daies of his youthful iolitie: the very thought whereof had bin sufficient to haue drowned himselfe in a gulse of sorrowe,

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row, had not his hvely picture perfectly pourtrayed in the youthful behauiour of his yong sonnes perswaded him, that part of his soule was diuided into their bodies. And thus feeding his olde conceit with the hope of his forward childezen, he so pleasantly spent the painful daies of his vnpleasant age in the verie remembrance of his succeeding heires, as though himselfe had shaken off the siluer cognisance of vnweldy age, and felt againe the warme springing bloud of aduenterous youth, til after the revolution of many yeres, as every beginning of necessitie hath his end, every day by course his night, and every spring by kinde his fall of lease, so attendant vpon his life was the all ending time of too timely death, whose appzoch pr figured by many infallible tokens, makes him wisely and warily prouide against his vncertain comming, lest at vnawares he might be sodainely taken in his secure living.

And as the first and greatest care that troubled his wearie minde, he calles before him his two sonnes, the pillars that were after to support the heauie burden of the good gouernement of that common wealth, which yet lay vpon his own shoulders: who comming to the bed side where their father lay, performing such dutie as naturally belongeth to parents from the children: and sorrowful to beholde their old father labouring so earnestly with the wearie assaults of neuer tired death, swelling sorrowe plentifully flowes out at the ch2istall condites of their starrelike eyes in pearlelike droppes of b2inie salt teares. Which when their old sire beheld, giuing charge to some of his attendants there by to set him vp in his bed, for by this had the bloody conflicts of al deuyring death almost druncke vppe al the moisture of his sometimes wel moistned members, and vsing some perswasions to his gréuing sonnes.

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sonnes to desist from their weeping, he thus begins
to dispose of his earthly riches. Since (quoth he) the
common course of continuall yeeres in the flourishing
and fading fruits of our mother Earth daily decy-
pher to our therfore greiuing thoughts the vnconstant
state of our here abode may sufficiently perswade and
induce you to conceiue the occasion that hath brought
me your old father to be a weake souldior as here you
see in the lists of death, who haue past the spring of my
growth, the summer of my flourishing, the Autumne
of my fading must now like a dried leafe fall in the
comfortlesse bosome of colde killing winter, at whose
end you must beginne, whose death must be your life,
and whose fall the step wherein you must tread to a-
rise: then take truce a while with the vnbrideled
course of nature, and learne with patience to lose that
which care can not keepe, your many teares may occa-
sion some hurt to you, but were they more then they
are, they could not al help me, when this conquering
captaine, vnder whose cruel hand lieth vanquished
your sometimes vanquishing father, proudly trium-
phed in the treble victorie of your worthie grandsire,
to whome my selfe was sole heire, he, though rich, yet
left me poore, and though I succeeded in the possession
of much wealth, yet was I then but slenderly stored
with wisdom, so that what he had carefully got I at
the first as carelesly spent, til the experience of some
few yeeres, though it were somewhat long, yet was it
not too late, enriched me with the one, as he had stored
me with the other: both which I leaue more amply to
you then I did plentifully receiue them of him. When
taking in hand his crowne, this heauen, quoth hee,
which I like Atlas haue long supported, must I now
lay vpon your shoulders, and on you two disload this
heauie burthen which hath so long bene onely borne

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by me. Breake it I may not in twaine, whose golden circle closeth so manie in one, containing the welfare of as many people within this ring, as the Atlantike sea compasses in her gréedie armes. Diuision brings forth disoord, disoord confusion, confusion desolation which woful end to pzeuēt by a good beginning, I haue thus contriued: Twins you are both, and therfore in birth equal. Thou (quoth hee) Perseus to his eldest son art a scholler richly adozned with the great gift of godlike learning, and therfore mightest chalenge a prerogative aboue thy brother: but that Theseus speaking then to his yongest sonne, hath as farre exceeded thee in the practise of a souldiour, as thou him in the profession of a scholler: so that being ioyned together, you would make one perfect man, but seuered, are two maimed members. It is reported of the Pelican, that with her owne blood she remiued her dead yong, and so I though wanting blood to recall you from the dead pleasures of yong secure delights, yet shal my latestt breath counsel you to the careful desire of vertuous deedes. The Kauen so long as she is able to prouide meate for her yong, wil neuer let them flie from her sight, and so fares it with me, willing stil to enioy your desired companies as long as I might: but sith I am now too weake to swim against so great a current as is this sea of death, that drowneth in eternall oblivion whatsoever the worlde hath brought forth since her first creation, I must here bidden of necessitye leave that which willingly I would prolong. And therfore in a word I bequeath to you this crown and kingdom, which your forefathers for many yeeres haue royally vpholden, be as one soule in two bodies, two men but one minde, two hands governed by one head: let thy wit direct his weapon, and his weapon defend thy wit. There is a roote in Libia that beareth

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reth two bulkes, which as long as they cleave together prosperously flourish, but being severed they soon fade. Great streames that forcibly breake forth of the bowels of mighty mountains, keeping their course together, within compas of two banks, forcibly preuaile against al oppositions, but being separated, their force decreases, and themselves in the end decay. There are two friendly fishes alwayes keeping companie together, opposing themselves against the mightiest monsters that the sea affords, but when by any sinister occasion they are separated, then are they easily overcome by smaller creatures then themselves. Be not proud lest you be hated, nor too humble, for then will you be dispised: heare the complaints of the poore, and then shall you be beloued, and punish the misdoers of the wicked, and so shall you be feared. Surfet not with drinking much wine, for that will breed follie, nor accompany with many women, for thence comes all iniquitie. Use your sports in measure, and deferre not your weightie affaires for the loue of vaine pleasure. Do iustice with all sinceritie, and let not your punishment taste too much of seueritie. Take heede of the crie of Orphans, for that ascends to heauen, and procureth speedie vengeance: and incurre not the curse of widowes, for that weyes downe to hell, from whence there is no redemption. Well could I wish that my now decaying breath were not so sore bged by impartiall death, to leaue this concaue castell of my panting breast, that I might more enrich you with that good, whereof you shall haue farre more neede then of much golde: but what heauen prouides, cannot by vs be preuented, and therefore must I leaue you to your fortunes, which proue as prosperously as your father wisheth it heartily. And so kissing both his sonnes, and making some signes still of more matter, when his
weake

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weake tong had denied any more to perfozme his office, and shortly after turning his face to the wall, ended his dayes.

The mutual succession of his sonnes in his Dukedome.

The second Chapter.



After whose death, his sonnes carefully provided to order all things in the best order for the adorning of their fathers funeral. All which done, the funerall rites solemnised, and euerie thing fully brought to ende, all which after, they, according to the solemn custome of their ciuil country, sumptuously had perfozmed, they took order for their coronation, which was also in euery part effectually discharged, as they had orderly deuised, so that now it rested for them ioyntly to goe forwarde in the peaceable gouernement of that quiet common wealth, which their deceased father had left vnto their careful furtherance. Long time did they mutually agree, and with brotherly loue increase, by their more and common accord, as well the obedient dutie of their homeborne subiects, as the admirable loue of foraine straungers. Their liues were delightful objects to euerie eie, and sweete subiects to the talke of euerie tongue, no Country, but imitated to liue by them, nor any people were they neuer so far distant, that longed not to see them. But as none are more subiect to great falles, then they which traue upon high hills, no tree so soon smitten with the thunderclap as Jupiters Oke,

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no, nor any thing sooner moved, then they that growe
on the mountaines : so is there no state likelier to bee
trod down with the aduerse chaunce of cruel confusion,
then that which standeth aboue all, if it be not the bet-
ter supported with the strong props of prudent aduice.

The mariage of the yong Princes, and the birth of their children, and the acci- dents that followed betwixt their wiues and children.

The third Chapter.



Done after these two yong Princes were
thoroughly seated in the stable throne of
their dead father, matched themselves in
mariage with wiues fitting their Ma-
iesties, with whom also they long and
very louingly liued, and in time their fortunes sorted
to such effect, as that Perseus his wife, whose name
was Emelia, brought forth a goodly sonne which they
named Adrian. And not long after fortune blessed The-
scus the other brother with the like good lucke, that Li-
uia (for so was his wife called) bore to him a faire
daughter, naming hir Berea, of whose birth as much ioy
was hoped, as by the blessed raigne of their fathers
and forefathers, happynesse of that land had bene re-
ceyued. But as often it falles out in the fairest daies,
that they are soonest soyled with the close baile of ma-
ny clustring clouds: the forwardest spring either bur-
ned with the extremitie of great heate, or drowned
with the abundance of much wet: so fared it with the
hie puffed by glozie of these peerlesse princes. For they
thus

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thus prodigally rising in the treasure of earthly felicitie, were some bankrupts of their so pleasant prosperitie. The enuious pride of these two Queens (a thing as proper belonging to women as death to men) could not content themselves to diuide the euen glozy of that equal kingdome, but either of them climbed for superiortie, sought to cut the golden thread of their husbands vnitie, which when their weake womanish deuises coulde by no meanes effect, but that stil their ambitious attempts were politikely prevented. Liuia forting a fit time when she might take Theseus her husband at the best aduantage, finding him one time solitarilie walking in a pleasant garden vnder a high ouerspzed vault of top-spreading vines, gins thus to vnfold the pestered rancour of her malicious swelling heart.

Husband (quoth she) seest thou not howe enuious fates, and our hard bending starres, hath vnluckily crossed the springing hopes of our aire-mounting thoughts in the succession of this kingdome, of which, for our offspring is a female, and theirs a male, of necessity they must succeed, and our name and lineal descent lie buried in the mistie forge of slavish obscuritie. When since there is no hope of equalitie in our succession, lift vp thy Eagle-mounting thoughts, and challenge some superiority in this present possession, equal thy brother in blessing, since ye are equal in birth, and inioy that thy selfe whilest thou liuest, that thy childe shal lose when thou art dead. We thinkes it were but right to thee, & iust in the brother, to yeld that nowe to thee, which he shal afterward inioy in another. Means hast thou many to effect this thing, time and thy state offer fit occasion, and reason may lead thee to consider the equitie of this cause by my former perswasion. Thee hath fortune richly blessed with the manlike

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like knowledge of martial affaires, and to thy custodie is committed the tuition of as manie men, as were able to ouerrun the wide face of the spacious world, if but thou wouldest but ioyne thy exceeding wil. When being fenced with such a force, if induced thereunto with forceable arguments of perswading truth, hee would not consent, thou maist forceable assaile him with conquering armes, which hee can no wayes prevent.

And thus breaking off her perswasive oration, shee silently attendes to heare her husbands answer: when the good king not a little grieved to heare the bad disposition of his wife, thus painted forth by her enuious tongue, gins to perswade her from those trayterous thoughts (as then he called them) which stirred her vp to this inhumaine rebellion.

Ab (quoth he) Liua, hatred is a thing hated of God aboue all sinne, a fault betwixt two enemies, a sinne betwixt two friends, but betwixt two brethren more then most wicked. Shal the branches of one bulke better prosper by beating downe each others fruit? Can the legges of one bodie support their burthen by spurning each other? And can the one soule of two brother king, knit fast by the dying precept of one old father, prosper their wel ordered wealth by disordered war? With not our sal for euer, to satisfie thy aspiring mind for a while: for whilest we mutually accord, both of vs shal flourish: but when wee breake the golden cords wherewith our olde father knit his two sonnes, then shal our state sone fal. Leauie any further to vge the thought of this thing, which to thinke is more sinne then many thousand other misdoeds. Neuer shal his heauy curse light on my head, that committed this care to my charge.

And thus abruptly, breaking off his dissuasive Oration,

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ration, in great furie he leaues the Garden, and cloysters vp himselfe in his priuate studie, giuing straight charge that no man should bee so bolde as to interrupt his melancholic meditation, till such time as himselfe should command the contrarie, where for a while wee must leaue him, laboring to suppress the still renuing sorrow that this bold attempt of his wicked wife had brought to his before quiet minde, and follow the neuer dying pride of this aspiring woman, who seeing her husband to reprocue her so bitterly for mouing a lute, wherein she hoped to haue him most sure, determined with her selfe, to vse other meanes for the performance of her intended purpose, though she had thus failed in her first attempt, which long she studied to bring to effect, fearing to vse any other counsel then her owne, least she should be betrayed, and leauing to vse any helpe more then her owne, least thereby she might be betrayed.

The pretended murder of Adrianus by his Aunt and her seruants, and what happened thereof, with his life in the Lions denne by whom he was found.

The fourth Chapter.



After many confused plots for her purpose, she called vnto her an old seruant of hers, in whom, for his age and long dutiful seruice, she reposed much trust: and after shee had adiuured him by all the benefites and good turnes that hee had

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had plentifully receiued at her liberall hands, that hee should secretly conceale and surely effect what she was now about to commit vnto his charge : which for that the slaue was as bloudilie affected to perforce anie villanie, as she boldly addicted to deuise this treacherie, he did not onelie sweare to conceale this her counsel, and effect her deuise, but also offered himselfe as most ready to spend limme and life in any sort that might do her seruice. This pleasing answer so pleased the working humour of this wicked woman as that taking aside this readie prepared varlet for the execution of her bloudy deuise, begins thus to instruct him in his intent. Many (quoth she) are like to be the calamities likely to ensue vpon our stocke and offspring, which in time to prevent I haue thus timely inuented a meane to prevent their beginnings, and so quite remove the feareful euent of so vnluckie an end as is likely to ensue thereof. Doest thou not (quoth she) observe the vnequal hope of our future happinesse in the possession of this present kingdome, I meane in our heires : and thinkest thou not I haue reason with timely prevention, to resist their vntimely purpose, would it not grieve thee, when the vncertaine houre of most certaine death, shall cut the golden threed that holdeth the liues of these two kings, to see thy matters, and my husbands daughter, who should equally enjoy the succession of this crowne, disinherited from the possession thereof by our brothers son. If this so inwardly touch a straunger, ah, would it not much more grieve me that am her mother. Our sorowes are more then our wordes are any wise able to expresse: And therfore greater then the common helpe of ordinarie comfort can in any part redresse. Moes thewed in teares are washed away with the same sorow, painted forth by the tongue vanishes to aire with the wordes : But the

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incarnate care of almost remediless euill cannot so liuely be in outward action expressed, as in the inward closure of a true sorrowful heart they are fully possessed : which care the unhappie course of euer ruling heauen hath thzowne heauilie vpon my head, whereof to discharge my selfe there is no remedie but one, and no one can effect it but thy selfe, vpon whose trust must I build as great foundation, as contains the quiet & good end of al this nation. More perswasions and they more perswasive too then these, could I vse to thee, that might induce thee with more alacrity, to do what I shall deuise: but relying vpon the readie endeouour in the execution of this secret busines, I wil thus acquaint thee with my purpose. Thou knowest how heauen hath blessed our brother Perseus with a goodly son, to whom I could wish much good, if it were not to mine owne harme. He, when the course of al outliuing time shall take away his father, and my husband, must of necessity alone possesse that which they now ioyntly enioy, then shall the issue of our bodies liue in subiection to him, who else should performe as much dutie to them, which no wayes we can eschew. But, and there she suddenly stopt, as though her saltring tongue had denied to proclaim the hellish practise she had plotted. Which when her servant perceyued, imagining somewhat should folow that interrupt period, boldly attempted to continue her almost repentant speech. Nay (quoth he) let not your Maiestie be afraid to commit to my secrecie any thing that shall tend to your acceptable seruice. For so fast hath the much meriting bond of your bounteous liberalitie, tied me to the dutiful obeysance of your Maiestie, that should you impose a greater labour to my perfozmaunce then Iuno to her Hercules, lay a farre more heauie burthen on my necke, then the heauens to supporting Atlas, commit a greater charge

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charge to my watchful care, then Iupiter to his all
eied Argus, I would spend al my dayes in trauailing
with Alcides, my strength in bearing with Atlas, mine
C. eyes in watching with Argos, but I would fullie
effect whatsoeuer you should thus faithfully commit to
my diligent endeouour. So great is the loue that I bear
both to your selfe the plentiful patrone of my present
estate, and your faire childe, of whom I expect as much
succeeding happinesse, as I possesse present hope, that
were it to rid both your brother, and his hateful son, I
should not onely thinke my labour imploied to a good
end, but also my toyle easie to be performed, and hope
my soule should be euerlastingly rewarded, for my no
more then dutiful seruice. At which wordes the Queen
now fully fleshed to aduenture vpon his so vilde an in-
deuour, begins now in plaine wordes to discouer what
befoze vnder a Curtin she had somewhat coloured, un-
ripping the hidden thoughts of her self-known heart,
to the longing eares of her readie attendant, thus be-
gan to enforme him in her fore-plotted mischife.

Then (quoth she) since thou so willingly offerest
what I did more then halfe feare to aske, and hast so
rightly met with mine owne meaning, I presume vpon
thy trust to tel what is the secretest wish of my vn-
quiet wil. My brother (quoth she) hath a sonne, which
I wish either he had not, or my selfe were not: and yet
not hate to him, but loue to my selfe is it that vrgeth
me to do that to him, which else his life would effect in
me. His moyst blood is the liquour which onely must
quench my dry thirst: and the end of his daies ad new
date, to the decaying number of my yeares, which if
thou wilt but effect, as I wil aduise, I wil clearlie ac-
quit thee of his death, and richly reward thee for that
deed. Remember to what I may preferre thee, from
which his life doth deferre thee: what profit thou maist
gaine

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gaine by the one, and what miserie thou art like to incurre by the other. For assure thy selfe, that if thou now denie the performance of my request, when I haue vncovered the effect of my drift, I wil not onely worke thy vtter disgrace, but hasten thy shamesfull decay. At which words, the fellow standing as one in a trauince, loath (as it should seeme) so heynously to offend, though he had rashly made so readie an offer, would neither affirmatiuely at the first answer her demaund, nor negatiuely denie her desire, til she waking him out of his drowsie dumpe, asked him if hee would boldly goe forwarde with his fore-pretended purpose, which for that his promise afore past (as hee thought) though wickedly concluded, yet could not wel be recalled, made him againe (after she had rowsed his drowsie spirits with the golden sound of rich rewards) make a solemne vow to effect what business soeuer she shuld appoint him. And she taking hir time to strike vpon an hote iron, thus followed her forepurpose.

This night (quoth she) for longer we may not delay it, I haue deuised readie meanes howe the boy should be deliuered into thy hand, and yet thou neuer suspected as any way accessarie to this priuie massacre. A Gentlewoman here attendant vpon me, whom I also haue sworn to our purpose, shal when the sable mantle of the silent night couers the lightsome face of all seeing heauen, for that she is well acquainted, and most familiar with those to whose watchfull charge our carefull brother hath wholly referred the trustful tutorage of his childe, being in the gouernment of an easie nurse, resort downe to the nurserie, and being there, merilie addicted to spend the long hours of the winter euening, at her fittest time, when she hath busied both the eyes and eares of those simple people,

nature of a woman.

people, with some such pleasant conceite, as wel she knoweth wil best fit their vaine humour, with the pleasing shew of some such vaine delight, as fitliest agreeth with the wanton disposition of a harmlesse childe, drawe him forth of the doores, where in a long darke entrie adioyning thereunto, shalt thou priuilie stand to attend his comming. And when she hath allured the childe from the sight of his attendants, she shal againe returne to her companie, and procede in her former myzt, busying their idle heades with the vaine prattle of some obscure riddle, a thing with such people in great esteeme, whilest thou (like the greedy puttocke) hastily leazing vpon that goodly prey, shalt forthwith make al possible speede, to conuey him into the vast bosome of a solitarie desart, neare adioyning the Citie. Where when thou hast brought him, without any remorse by some quicke meanes, make a hasty end of his betraied life, and disfiguring his body, leaue his dead carcas to be the hungrie prey of some emptie beast, whence thou maist safely returne without the blushing marke of iealous suspition. Feare not what may issue the euent of this action, for that none can accuse thee so much as of suspition. The spechlesse childe made breathlesse by this meanes, shal neuer liue to learne thy name: and for all other eyes, the darke sable vale of stil silent night, wil either lull them into a secure slumber, or penne them vp in the strong inclosure of their quiet homes, through whose hard flintie walles, the feeble sight of their weake eyes cannot worke.

And thus hauing intised the saely soles to consent to her folty, after they had fully agreed vpon the time, place, and other necessary circumstances, she with manie faire promises of rich rewards, sent him away, where the cruel caitife stil iterating in his minde the

D

hope

The first part of the

hope of rewarde, and neuer respecting the feare of such punishment, as by the iust iudgement of the highest heauen, hang heauie ouer the sinfull heades of so great offenders, spent away al that day, til the wearie Sun hauing finished his still running iourney, and that al things gan now leaue their dayly labour, and betake themselves to their nightly rest, he still mindful of his vow, reioyced accordingly to the place and time afore appointed, where he had not long attended, before the gentlewoman appointed to play the prologue of this sudden murder came by, and hauing in al points duly obserued the strait charge of her subtil mistresse, in the secret intising forth of the weake limmed childe, she at length effected it. And deliuering him ouer into the bloodie hands of this butcherly beast, retournes againe her selfe, to comfort her former companie: where after they had spent a great part of the night in such chat as loose tongued women commonly accustome at their idle meetings, at last, so that the night was somewhat spent, or for some other occasion, they broke off their talke.

When the betraied nurse looking for her charge, missed the childe, suddenly vsing meanes to enquire al about the house, wherein they spent so much time at home, that their harmelese infant without al contradiction was easily conueyed abroad. Hard newes were these to those wofull parents, that in the middelt of their Sommer sunne, were so suddenly counteruailed with a winters storme. Much search was made, many examinations were had, and al other meanes were vled that might any wise tend to the finding out again of this so strangely lost Prince, that being safe in his fathers house, strongly guarded with the sure diligence of faithfull seruants, carefully kept by the dutifull seruice of diligent attendance, notwithstanding in the
midst

nature of a woman.

midst of al his fathers men, the surest place of his princely house, and in the bosome of his nearest nurse, should be so strangely conueyd : which what grieffe it was to those so louing parents, I leaue to their consideration that haue tasted the losse of so sweet children.

And now to returne againe to our more then deceitful Sinon, who by this time had quite passed the bounds of the Citie, and tracing vp and downe the obscured wayes of an vnpeopled forrest, could find no fit place to execute this detestable murther, til at the last the pale faced Queene of the shadie night gins in her siluer coach to search the secret corners of the darkest denes, obscure shadowes, when he tracing vp and downe to find out some fit place for his purpose, at the length happened vpon a thicke grove of brode Cypres trees, the fatal couert of whose enuious branches seemed vnto him as the fittest place he could find for to execute his abhominable practise, There setting downe the prettie childe. who although his tender yeares had not yet afforded him so much reason, as to ghesse at the euent of this forced iourney, yet did the vnacquainted maner of his carriage, the vnusual time of the night, and the vnpleasant temperature of the colde aire. vngobehement the cries of the silly infant to yeelde such dreadful exclamations, from euerie resounding Echo of these vnpeopled plaines, as would haue stirred the hatefull hearts of vnrelenting sauaiges to haue pitied his childish complaints, til this more then bloodie minded beast, stripping the poore infant from the most of his outward attire, as meaning not onely to deprive him of his life, but also to leaue his princely bodie so naked, that no man should by any outward appearance descerne what, or from whence he should be conueyed. Long it was or his vnaccustomed hands could finde the way to vnfurnish the poore infant of his out-

The first part of the

ward affire, when in the midst of his troublesome
businesse, he suddenly heard, as it had bene the furious
approch of some hastie beast. When he looking through
thin branches of a yong leaved Lawzel, might by the
light of the Moone, which by this had climed the high-
est point of the howling sphere, perceiue a hastie Lio-
nesse, secretly searching the hidden bottome of e-
uery seuerall bush. For as it should seme the recoue-
rie of some late losses, which by the sequels might be
indged none otherwise, but that some watchful wood-
man taking the aduantage of her absence, had run-
ningly conueyed away her yong whelpes, while shee
was iourneying abroad to prouide some speedie reliefe
for their sustenance, who returning backe to her deso-
late denne, and finding herselfe depriued of her yong,
was wofully searching what she had vnwillingly lost,
with fearefull approch so affrighted the guiltie consci-
ence of this murdering miscreant, as that leauing the
yong child to the greedy prey of this angry beast, made
at speedie haste to saue himselfe from her feareful fury,
which he so speedily performed, that in short time he
rid himselfe from the feare of the Forrest. But as euery
sinne cannot escape his seuerall punishment, so had the
iust censure of all iudging heauen appointed a worthe
reward for this his wicked worke. For euen at the fur-
thest boundes of the broad plained Forrest, a hungrie
beare seeking sustenance, to relieue her insatiate desire
of meate, suddenly encountered him so neare, that
though his footmanship was more then ordinarie, yet
it nothing preuailed to helpe him from this extremi-
tie. For so neare the bold beast followed his still flying
steps, that ere he could get almost any way from their
first meeting place, she had eagerly seized on his noble
feare-falling bodie. And she now as farre from mercy,
in peecemeale tearing him, as he from pitie in rigo-
rously

nature of a Woman.

ronly abusing the other, had in short time buried in her beastly bellie, his sinful members that had iustlie deserued such equal measure, remunerating him in this fashion, for the vengeance meriting transgression. By this the woful Lionesse for her vnerpected want, had by trauesing round about those spacious plaines searching euery shadow, & boldly ransacking y couered bottom of euerie bush, egerly following her hot pursute, came at length to the place, where the yong forsaken infant lay pitifully complaining and weakely struggling to seeke that succour which that barren place did not affoord. Which when the sauage beast had suddenly espied, leauing her further pursute, gan contrary to her kind, quietlie to view the forsaken estate of that forlorne infant, whose pittiful case did, as it should seeme, work moze remorse in that reasonlesse creature, then it had done in his nearest kinne: for after she had with her teete in the easiest manner that she could, turned it vp and downe sadlie ouerlooking this wofull losse, differing from her natural kinde, and forgetting both the sorrow and feare of her owne yong, making shift as she could to lappe againe the childe in those clothes which the fugitiue murderer had for feare left behind, made such meanes, as that taking vp the child by those clothes, she in her teeth conueied him to a sorrowfull denne, meaning to supply her former losse, by this new found spoile, where we wil a while leaue Adrianus sonne to this the fornamed worthe Perseus in the unkindly couert of a lions denne to the tutorage of a wilde beast, that was naturallie descended from the ofspring of ciuil men, and returne to see their sorrowe at the court for this sodaine losse, which was no lesse grieuous than the thing it selfe was great. Many posts were euery way dispatched to make enquirie, lest peraduenture by the sle deceit of some subtil enemye her

The first part of the

might haue bene stollen for a pledge: proclamations in euery place were made, and promises of rich reward for them that could bring any tidings of this lost childe, which being without helpe, perished without hope: wherein when they had spent much time to small purpose, they surceased their search, hoping that one day the length of time would discover the effect of this trueth.

In the meane while the subtile Quene, by whose meanes this pretended murther was thus closely wrought, would be nothing behinde in the often resorting to her sorrowfull sister, vsing much perswasive counsell, as well to decrease her grieffe, as shewing many womanish teares, to seem as it were a great partaker of her sorrow, thinking by this meanes to remove the blemish of suspicion from her selfe. But that which troubled her most was, that many daies being ouerrunne since the dede was supposed to be done, she heard no word of the returne of her seruant, whom to this end she had appointed. But perswading herself by many circumstances, that the thing it selfe was effected, she grounded her conceit vpon this, the fellow wisely foreseeing howe the hardest thing bid is the easiest found, surest counsell sometime soonest disclosed, and faithfullest trust proues manie times the foulest treacherie, had left this countrie, and betaken himselfe to liue else-where, where he might be free from whatsoeuer calamitie might come vpon it. From whome she secretly desired to heare, though she were out of all hope to see him. And thus leauing no circumstance vsought into, no deuise vndealt withal, no plot vnperformed, that might remove from her the enuious eyes of iealous suspicion: She spent many daies untill such time as this vntimely losse was almost forgotten of them all. Thus hauing brought euery thing

nature of a woman.

thing to the bent of her owne bow, and feeding herselfe with successive hope of her daughter, who now was onely heire to that rich dowry, she determined no more to assay any other assault, for the quicke dispatch of her other brother, thereby the sooner to possesse solely to herselfe, wherein she was strongly counterchecked by an other. But as in the fading time of drooping Autumne, no winde seldome riseth without more foule weather, no cloud that bringeth not with him a present storme, and neither winde nor storme, but are stil renewing, til they haue quite disarmed trees of their leaues, fields of their flowers, and flowers of their fruits: So did the vnconstant course of their malevolent aspects, powred down vpon them such winter stormes of continuing calamities, as neuer left their unhappie house, til it had quite nipped al their flowers, topped their leaues, and almost rent vp the original rootes.

The pretended purpose of Liuia for the murthering of her brothers daughter, and the euent thereof.

The fift Chapter.



As the same malecontented minde that draue this sister to the deuillish deuising of so damnable an endeavour, gan also to work the like in the other. She now perceiuing all her rest quite bereft, her growing hope to soone turned to dying mishap, and her merrie thoughts to mournful sighes, thus spoyled of al her pleasure, gins
deuise.

The first part of the

deuise howe shee might get a partaker in her paine. Long wandred her wearie thought in the tedious labyrinth of many, no lesse doubtfull then dangerous induements, sometimes studying on this thing, another time standing on that thing, like the vnacquainted trauailer, that meeting with the many windings of seuerall wayes, for want of some instruction is halfe doubtful where his way lies: so she, seeing with the eyes of her affections many wayes, as good as herselfe can wish wantes, meanes to affect them according to her wil, yet as there is nothing so obscure, but with much labor may be learned: no worke so wearie, but toils wil ouerturne: no time so tedious, but it may be outwozne: so she at length by overcasting the count of her seuerall cares, found a meanes (as shee thought) to quiet her conscience, which for that shee certainly perswaded herselfe of the firme grounded friendship of hir wel meaning husband to his best beloved brother, she durst not be so bold as to whisper a breath of mislike, or worde of wrong-dealing against him or his, yet notwithstanding, intending to ad some far-fetched policie, to bring her brother and sister, now in the bosome of al earthes blessings, to become fellow mourners with her in these manie miseries, she thus wrought meanes to effect her long framing forme.

These two princes in the beginning of their peaceful raigne, had for their diuersity of delight, about some two or thre mile from the Citie, planted a faire vineyard, where for their disport themselves in the pleasant time of al pleasing Summer, would oftentimes resort. Thers besides the pleasant shades of broad leaved vines laden with the heauie burdens of cluster bending Grapes, the apish imitating workemen, chosen from the chieft partes of al that countrey, had cunningly drawne in the many searching streames of
neare

nature of a woman.

neare adioyning riuers bounding each other in their
crickling armes, whose gliding currants full fraught
with many sorts of silver coloured fishes, and banks
bordered with all sortes of fruitful flourishing trees,
plains peopled with the curious work of mutating art
as the luckelesse loue of learned Apollo, compassing
within the circle of his art framed armes the transfor-
med substance of his dearest Daphne curiously cut of a
laurel bush. By that on the side of a pleasant hill, under
the couert of an artificial rocke stands trembling A-
eteon viewing y^e wel fashioned bodies of many naked
nymphs, whose liuely portrature shadowed under the
transparant substance of the silver coloured streamer,
affright the wanton fishes at the sodaine sight. Manie
curious conceits, as forests of wilde beasts framed
cut of the big bushes timerous hares persecuted with
the speedie course of wel fashioned greyhounds, cut out
of the sweete plants of still springing rosemarie, that
shaken with the cold breath of a sweet southerne blast
beguile the dazeling eyes of the steadfast beholder, as
though the fast rooted trees liuelily folowed the artifi-
ciall frames with their resembling forces there, vpon
Hebars swift streames swimmes Orpheus mourning
harpe, whose silver strings softly touched with the ea-
sie stroke of the cunning conueyed water with manie
tragicke strokes bewailes the vnfortunate acte of her
masters end, manie curious arbours framed of the di-
uerse sorts of euer springing plants cunninglie ioyned
and closely couered with their broad shady leanes, and
fresh blown buds, whose ground richly spread with the
faire wrought tapisserie of many sweete flowers might
rauish y^e vnacquainted senses of any mortall beholder:
besides the seuerall musickes of sundry birdes, seated
vpon the tender sprays that overspreades these hea-
uenly houses in this earthly paradise, whose skill ex-
ceeding

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ceeding the artificiall forme of Twæte tuned strings feedeth the louing desire, with continuall delight thither. This wilie woman, though enuying at anothers end, yet vnder colour of recreation and desire of fresh aire, perswaded her husband and his brother with all their trains to resort: who as glad to satisfie hir pleasant seeming conceit which not long ago had sustained the hard burnt of fel misfortune, as also to driue away such melancholy matter as yet troubled all their moodie mindes, sone assented to her desire, where when they came, she had foreappointed many seuerall kindes of sundry delights to draw away the earnest affection of their moze serious affaires: as at their first entrance stood a sauage satyre trimmed vp in the broade leaues of an oake branch, whose fierce countenance artificially framed, as though he had meant to affright their sodaine approach, naturally counterfeited what their Art had coloured, and thus boldly beginnes to entertaine their first entrance:

Faire colored frames of fortunes better sort,
Whom Apish art hath deckt with others plumes,
Drawen with delight, dainties to resort
Vnto this sweete balmed aier with earths perfumes,
Where nature formed in fashion of these springs,
Braues colouring skill in richest courts of kings,
How may the hope of countries power content
Feede the selfe pleasing soules of clownish swaines,
When ciuill kings leaues citties meriments
To solace them vpon the pleasant plaines?
Where the greene beautie of the fading grasse
Presents their shades as through transparent glasse,
That when they looke, their inward soules may see,
Their bodies borne of earth as well as we.
And when the course of nature cuttes the threed

Of

nature of a woman.

Of this times seruant soone decaying state:
Then kings and base borne beggar being dead,
Princes and pefants prized at one rate,
Where, by succeeding ages shal be found,
Al bodies buried in one selfe same ground:
Whose dust decayed bodies wanting breath,
Telles the sure sentence of impartiall death.

Thus as this discontented resembling savage was
about to extend the baine of his satyricall verse: the
company as it should seeme not affecting that melan-
cholie methode departed. And iourning further into
the pleasant walks of that flourishing field at the tur-
ning corner of a musicke murmuring spring were so-
dainely, encountered with a troupe of Trytons finely
flourishing in their siluer sounding trumpets, till the
master Neptune was behinde them, egerly inticing, &
strongly strugling with faire Andromeda, vppon the
sencelesse side of a ruthles rocke. From this they were
conueyed into a spacious Arbour, scituate in the midst
of many shady trees, whose sheltering boughes serued
as a couering curtaine, to keepe away the parching
heate of the summers sunne, then at his highest meri-
dionall zenith, where was a curious table richly spred
and fully furnished with all manner of seuerall serui-
ces, where after they were orderly placed, & had some-
what satisfied their hungrie appetites, sodainely they
were presented with the natural shew of nine almost
naked virgins, representing the nine Muses, who de-
cently placed vpon the swæte side of a flowerie banke,
gan tune their solemne instruments vnto the swæte
straines of their angelicall voices, amongst whome
a goodly faire creature, whose moze than earthly sem-
blance containing in her faire countenance, moze car-
nation coloured beautie, than graced all the goddesses

The first part of the

in the vale of Ida, when they proudly apparelled, set forth the richest formes of their inticing faces, whose golden tresses curled in cunning knottes, dangling downe her cherrie-stained cheekes, wauing abroade with the swæte blast of the mildely moving aire, seeming cunningly to kisse her vermillian countenance, whose maiestically moving looks forcibly drew all the idle eyes of that present assembly, to wonder at that so wel framed beauty, til she with hir fingers the delightful organs of al ruling fancie, sweetely ginnes strike the trembling strings of an iuozie lute, and ecchoing with her angelicall voice to the silver sound of her wel tuned instrument, sung this following Ditie:

The soone inticed Græcian Dame,
Whose lustfull loue with *Priams* ioy,
Kindled the fire where grew the flame
That after burnt faire blooming *Troy*,
When brine-salt teares had burnt away
That pleasant baite of sweete delight,
Which made the youthfull prince assay
To steale her from her husbands fight:
Looking within a mirrours view
Vpon her withered wrinckling skinne,
Then all too late gins to renew
The sorrow for her former sinne,
And sending out as many showers
Of teares, that swiftly trickled downe,
As would haue quenched the flaming towers,
Which lighted *Pirrhys* to the towne,
That night when *Troy* was ouerturned,
And Græcians swanne in *Troians* gore,
When *Iliions* buildings all were burned,
That neuer felt fiers force afore.
Then gins she praise a maidens life,

The

nature of a Woman.

The golden time of all content
Cursing that day made her a wife,
That wrought her this disparagement:
For if (quoth she) I had traced the wood,
With sacred *Dians* maiden traine,
Then had my vestall life beene good,
Who now must pine away in paine,
But be my fall a meanes to moue
Those faire borne creatures of my kinde,
To shunne in time inticing loue,
That captiuates a free borne mind,
For if in time I had foreseene
The end my vnbrideled will,
This dismall day had neuer beene,
And all *Troyes* towers had then stoode still.

Thus as the heauenly harmonie of those earthly
goddesses had drawne away the minds of the rauished
beholders, a trecherous flauie tutored befoze, by hir vn-
happie counsel, closely seized vpon the other child her
brothers daughter, and being cunningly conueyed
from them at a backe gate, which led forth toward the
high steep rocks that seuers the neighbour lands from
the fierce inuasion of the furious sea, hee in al hast bied
him thitherward, which for that it was not farre di-
stant, he soone attained, and for that the water was
then somewhat low, and that flood had yet couered a-
gaine the naked bosome of the broad sands, seeking in
the secret bottome of the vnsearchable sea, to hurte the
smal bodie of this prettie babe, he was forced to goe
lower downe then willingly he would haue aduen-
tured, but that of necessitie he must doe it, to aete that
which befoze he had inuented. Peare adioyning to
that place within the strong compasse of a nature
walled caue, he wed out of the hard bosome of a flintie
rocke,

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rocke, was the abode of manie exiled people, who for that the lawes of their countrey had denied them the benefit of peaceful liuing in their quiet countrey, by reason of some great offences by them committed, had there settled themselves, whereof some being then placed as Centinels vpon the highest promontorie of all the bordering shore, looking euerie way to espie some passengers, vpon whom they might make their prey, at the length espied this posting companion hastning to the execution of this harmelesse childe, and loath to let them escape their hands, some who were readier then the rest, in haste followed down towards him apace, who by this time was come to the water side, and being busied about the disfurnishing of the babe, and thinking himselfe secure from any approaching companie, vntil at length turning his face suddenly about, whether to lay away some of the clothes, or reach some necessarie thing as he then wanted, he espied this exiled companie hastily comming vpon him, whom for that himselfe was borne within the confines of that Countrey, he straightway knew: and being somewhat acquainted with their maners, that they were bloodie minded men, giuen ouer to the rigorous desire of vnrightheous liuing, and bound vnder the subiection of no law, he fearefully leaning the childe halfe naked, and halfe clothed, lying sprawling vpon the wet sandes, for such was the number of her tender yeares, that she could neither speake to imploze relief, neither goe to ease herselfe of that vnaccustomed order wherein he had left her: but he swiftly taking the aduantage of his nimble legs, made al possible speede to escape their comming, who in his hastie flight, not regarding to take the right way that might readiest direct him out of the danger of those doubtful sandes, was ere he were aware, insconced within the trustlesse compasse

nature of a woman.


compasse of a soft hollow ground which we call quick-
sands, where he suddenly sinking downe. was by and
by buried in the bottom of the salt flowing sea, a iust
reward for his so deuillish desert.

Now were the other, who prosecuted this bad at-
tempt of so shameful a sin, come vnto the place where
the helpelesse child lay, pitiously beraged in the sandie
mire of that moist ground, whose hearts although they
were closed vp in vnrelenting breasts, and were men
exercised in naught but murders, and massacres, yet
seeing so goodlie a forward childe, richly adorned with
manie garments of much worth, they took more com-
passion ouer it then commonly they vsed in the like
cases, and carefully carying it home to their caue, took
such order as the childe was wel relieued againe, that
with feare & cold was almost dead. Her must we leave
to accompanie them in their sauage Cel, and returne
to the Princes, who now were swimming in all de-
light in the pleasure of their Garden.

Of the accidents that happened

these Kings after the death of
their children.

The sixth Chapter.

 heir dinner being done, the musick with-
drawing, and al their sport fully ended,
for that the swift paced Chariot of the
Sunne drawing through the Chrystall
skies, with fierie breathing horses, had
now wel nigh attained the ende of their wearie iour-
ney, when these merrie disposed people gathering to-
gether, al their companie intended to leaue the coun-
try

The first part of the

try delights, and returne again to their pallace, where when al were gathered together readie to depart, suddenly was missed the yong childe. Who first for that they imagined she had bene borne forth for delight, by some of their household servants into the coole shadowe of those Summer groves, where with all spæde they duly searched, but in vaine, for none could find though almost al of them were busied in seeking of her, so that at leugth, hopelesse to find what they so unluckily had lost, they were forced to returne home with as manie weeping teares, as they came forth with smiling ioies. Heaue were the discomforted parents for their lost childe, sad the poore subjects for their Princes paine, and generally these vnerpected accidents, did driue all minds into a deepe muse, what strange fortune should so sowly foyle the settled estate of these princely pæres, two beautiful babes even in their cradles so cunningly conueyed from the watchful eies of their wearie nurses, and no meanes of suspition apparant, that might induce any probable coniecture of their escape. Well, to be short, as the greatest burthens must with patience be overborne, the hardest haps with humilitie be helped, and the saddest sorowes with some salues be seuered: so these royal personages, considering the changeable estate of vnstable chaunce, that like the fading flourish of an April day, soone laughing, and soon loweing againe, considering that the misfortune of ill chauncing change, often times in faire flourishes presented, though they may be often foresene, yet are they seldome pzevented, made them patiently to relie vpon hope of al helping heauen, whose readie power would one day either restore them to their former hopes, or by the iust dome of all ending death, restraine them from al future mishaps.

Thus being both of them diuorced from of cherishing
chil.

nature of a woman.

children, whose pleasing presence might recreate the melancholie dispositions of their world wearied minds, they sadly spende the wearie remnant of their wofull dayes, abandoning all meanes that might moue their mirth, refusing all counsell of comfortable friends, and delighting in nothing but desperate despaires, vsing their tongues to tel no tale but tragidies, nothing Ientred into their eares but the harsh harmonie of pittifull paines, frequenting no pleasant places but the dismal shewes of blacke Cypresse shades, from whose concaue bulks bounds the harsh hellish noyse of the ill boading Owle, fasting the daies with sad sighes, and watching the night with sorrowful slumbers, representing by their liues the true image of linelesse death.

The still lasting hate of the proud

Queenes, the meanes they wrought to
separate the loue of their husbands,
and the euent thereof.

The seuenth Chapter.



Ve heard in the beginning of this hystorie, how Lydia wife to this worthie Theseus, had assayed with byging arguments of some perswading force, to vntwine the wel-spun threede of fast linking loue, betwixt these peaceful and princely brethren, blessed in all worldly wealth, except the vnfortunate thoyse of two wicked wines. Now as such are the rotes, such are the fruits: such as is the cause, such likewise is the effect: so fares it with the wil-working wits of these unkindly creatures, both wicked, because both womē.

H

Emelia

The first part of the

Emelia likewise boldly presuming upon the patience of her impatient husband, sorting a time when for his melancholie recreation, he had seuered himself into a garden, whether he often resorted: where sitting him downe vnder the broad braunches of a bleeding Pulberie, and supposing himselfe to be safe from disturbing approach of mistiking companie, he taking in his beaues handes a sad tuned instrument, vnto whose tract straines he solemnly sung this sadde song.

Some Poets say there is a hill,
Where fittes the Ladies of delight,
Composed of Musicks sacred skill,
And teaches euerie man t'indight.
Thence doth my minde returne againe,
For she can find no solemne muse,
Whose discontented tract straine,
Will fit the Anthems she must vse,
They sing of ioy, and she of woe,
They of delight, she of vnrest,
There let their merrie Muses goe.
Whom fairer dayes haue better blest,
A sad tuned hart's my instrument,
Whose strings all out of tune I straine,
Striking great dumps of discontent.
Till all be pluckt in two with paine,
My Musicke is a sorrowes song,
Where discords sound is smart delight,
My dittie, life that lastes too long,
To see desire crost with despite;
Vnpleasant harmonic God knowes,
When out of tune is euerie string,
Bad sounds that all of discord growes,
And sad the Muse that so must sing.

But

nature of a woman.

But some poore soules must merry make,
Whose else dead drooping cheare would die,
Least sorrow should asunder breake,
There groning soules with miserie,

Which dittie after he had solemnly sung, and that the trickle teares stopt vp the pleasant passage of his sorrowful song, easily rising from melancholy seat, gins with sad sigh to reiterate to himselfe the hard mishaps of his malecontented life. When turning him backe, & seeing his wife hastning towards him, would faine haue shunned her comming, as loath to be disturbed in his discontent, but she intreating him staide his escape, and thus gins cunningly to insinuate with his sorrow.

Husbande (quoth shee) wilt thou still suffer this canker of discontent to eate away in dispaire, the sweete Summer of thy chiefest dayes? Sorowe exceeding cure, must also bee past care. Hurts that cannot be auoided, must by meanes be amended. Shal the patient let his soze fester, because he cannot abide the surgeon should search it? And wilt thou die in despaire, because thou suffrest none to disswade thee from this discontent? It is an olde saying, Nothing is nearer the tree then the barke: and shoulde there bee any thing moze deere to a man than his wife? Therefore was she taken out of his bzeast, because she should be alwayes in his bosome. Suffer me to vnrip the soze, for I wil be a gentle surgeon, and being ransacked I wil minister soueraine salue to mitigate thy malady: why doest thou then this in discontent, turne from me as wearie of my company? who hath diuorced thy liking from my loue, or drawn thy desire from my delight? Whereat the wearied king faintly answering his dissembling wife gins thus mildely to answer: My woes (quoth he) moze than the sandes vppon the

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choares, wil hardly by counsel be qualified, though it were more then the droppe of water in the sea: the which dispaire of comfort drives mee from desiring counsel: but if thou canst bring any balme that wil expel this grieffe, any salve that wil search this soze, or any thing els that wil worke mine ease, I wil (for thy sake) heare it, though peradventure I shal not vse it. Let me (quoth she) see thy disease, and then shalt thou heare my denise. What (quoth he) can I in a worde, though it bee as much as a worlde, the discontented harme of an ouer charged heart, hauing al things, and yet enioying nothing, pleased of al except my selfe, and by my selfe displeasing al but my selfe. Thus haue I shortly (quoth hee) tolde thee my grieffe, though I despaire, by thee to receiue any releef: why quoth she haue so many yeeres runne ouer my wofull head, and thinkest thou I neuer tasted the sharpe dealing of discontent: yes, thy self canst witnes to my woe, with what grieffe I haue ouergone the losse of our chiefest comfort, so strangely tane away which patience did cure in me: but greater helpes hast thou for remedy. Is not some meate digested with sweete sawce: cold humours expelled with hote sweates: soft yron filed with harde steele: and shal not discontentiue dispaire be dispersed with the sweet counsel of contented comfort: lets gesse (quoth she) at thy maladie, and then I wil giue thee a soueraine remedy: loopty hast thou let ouerslip the pleasures of many faire daies by thine owne neglect. Aire vnmoued straightwaies corrupteth: and water that standeth quickly stinckes: keene edges not vsed ware dull: and good qualities not exercised ware dead. Moathes eate the vnwozne garment, and grasse confusedly ouergrown the vntrodden pauement: better had we want wit, then not vse it. The souldiour that cowardly keepe fast his weapon when he should vse it

nature of a Woman.

it against his enemy, were farre better haue none at
all. How I should compare thy state I know not, ex-
cept to the miserable estate of a muddie miser, that ha-
uing much, wil vse naught. Howe great gifts hath
beauen and thy forward indeuour indued thee withal:
and since then, how little hast thou employed them?
Oh there is a branch sprung from thine owne root, that
had he but a small quantitie of thy qualities, a modill
of thy minde, would long ere this haue cured in him-
selfe that grieffe whereon thou nowe gronest, and
long since haue pleased himselfe by plaguing thee: but
that the iust God considering thy quiet contented dis-
position, that rather desirest to suffer iniurie then to
challenge equitie. He is a souldier forsooth: what then:
but then a scholler, a thing far more in account among
men. Did Ajax his big braues ouerbeare Vlysses his
wise words? No. And shal thy brothers furious looks
ouerturne thy friendly dealing? Thy displeasing dis-
paire is his delightsome content, and thy passion his
pleasure. Howze then thy sleeping conceit, shake off
the sad earthly melancholy wight from thy light ayrie
spirit, and boldly brace him, that so basely ouerbeares
thee. Happily thou thinkst these words proceed fro some
envious intent forthought by me, but God, and all
good men can witnesse with me, howe I loued and ho-
noured him and his. And therewithall sheading a few
womanish teares, which as bountifully fall from their
eyes, as wordes plentifully flow from their mouthes,
drew the moodie mind of this malecontented king in-
to such a labyrinth of wearie thoughts as had almost
quite tyred his melancholy imagination, yet wisely
repressing the furious rage of rigorous woes woulde
not in bitter tearmes exclaime, but rather determined
with himselfe to couer the fury of his choler with some
shew of patience, til time and oportunitie shoulde mi-

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nister some better occasion, to acquite his intended injuries, as he then conceived by this perswasion of his peruerse wife, and so shewing not withstanding some shew of discontent: which not a little pleased his wife, that she had yet some hope to separate their so sure ioyned affections. And thus hauing ended their parlee, they both departed from thence, and betooke themselves to their pziuate chambers.

How Emelia wife to Perseus

wrought subtile means to set at ods the two brethren, and what ensued thereof, with the flight of both the dukes, and the banishment of their wiues.

The eight Chapter.



Emelia in the mean time, albeit in some part her bloodie thirst of warres was quenched, yet not so fully satisfied as she earnestly desired, she oft times deuised with herself how she might fully effect her long looked for intent, in the end, pziually packing with a seruant of hers, whom to such an end she had long reserued, and bounteouslie rewarded. One morning seeing her brother Theseus taking the benefit of a pziuate walke, whither he continually euery morning resorted, sent downe vnto him by her foresaid seruant, desiring him as he conceived any good opinion of her, and fauoured the welfare of himselfe, that he would in al secret sort commit himself vnto

nature of a woman.

unto the trust of that her servant, to be conveyed by him into her chamber, where she had verie secreete affaires to impart unto him, such as neare touched his credite and estate. This credulous Prince attributing moze affiaunce to his sister then prouident foresight would haue permitted, gently condescends to her cunning contriued treason. The suspicion whereof was as farre from his wel-meaning minde, as the highest part of heauen from the lowest centre of the earth. But as with faire stales trustful birdes are easiest taken: with bright baits the seely fish is soone deceived: so with the faire flatterie of a wicked disposed woman, this faire prince was fowlie betrayed, to the dishonour of him, to the discredite of her, and the vtter subuerting of that stedfast established common wealth for ever.

At last following the direction of a subtile slave poynted for the nonce to betray this pœrelesse Prince, he was innocently brought into a sudden snare. For comming into her chamber, he found his sister in law in her bed, a thing, then which nothing was lesse looked for at his hands. Which when he saw, he aduentured to goe nearer her, supposing her to haue bene sick, because the day being somewhat spent, she was not yet got from her nightly resting place. At whose comming she suddenly starting vp, exclames with so loude a voice, as that she was easily heard to the furthest places of the pallace. To whom incontinent flockes a number of diligent attendants, to vnderstand the cause of her so sudden crye, to whom she feines a forged tale, how her brother, and their king had boldly aduentured to approach the entrance of her Chamber, and violently assayed to haue ranshed her in her bed, for which cause she was constrained to vse the meanes of her tongue.

for

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for that the weake force of her womanish hand, was scarce able to defend his fierce assault. To witnesse whereof she calles the false treacherous villain, whom before she had made a meane to draw him thither. He as subtile as the dissembling Greekish slaue, that inticed the trustful Troians to their cruel end, thus tels a substantial discourse, how the king entring the chamber, offered such violence vnto his sister. And then with much counterfeit action, he beginnes to shew the manner of his behauiour.

By this time had the report of these vnwelcome newes come to his brothers eares, who hastening to the place where all this assembly were gathered together: where when he came, he found his wife with blubbered cheekes, and loose dishonelled haire, reiterating her former feined tale, and her hyred slaue vilelie affirming the same with manie deepe oathes, the truth of this truthlesse trecherie, which so incensed his furious minde, as he looking vpon his innocent brother, gins thus bitterly breake the sure linked chain of true brotherly loue, which they both till that time had so mightily maintained.

Ah (quoth hee) hast thou so soone forgotten the good precepts of our dying father, whose straight charge might haue euē (as it were) chayned thee from this foule offence of sensuall sinne, but the iust heauens seeing into the secreete corners of thy dissembling heart, wherein was nothing but deceitful double dealing, haue for thy more then sinful hypocrisie, rewarded thee with the iust punishment of double iniquitie, from whome I here before God, and all these our seruants and subiects, disioyne my selfe, bowing hereafter to bee so farre from gracing thee with the frendly name of brother, as that I meane to prosecute

nature of a woman.

secrete thee with the deadly hate of an enemy, and so I leave thee, that never meaneth in courtesie againe to resalute thee.

When as Theseus, about so2 to replie in his owne defence, was interrupted by the confused noyse of the murmuring people, by whose whole assent hee was generally condemned, as the wicked worker of this villainous practise, who standing as it were in a sworne to see this vnerpected exigent would haue spoken in his owne defence, but being interrupted by the meanes of some of his enemies confederates, he was forced in silence to depart, who coming downe to his wife, and declaring the whole truth of this trecherie, and taking the aduantage of the time, least that delay might againe reconcile them, following on the angry disposition of her husband, so2 to leuie speedie armes, both so2 the better fortifying of himselfe against his brothers furie, as also if in time he took the matter in hande, he should gather together the chiefeest and best part of the countrey, whose counsel he with all speede followed.

But his expedition in gathering forces together, was not so great as his brothers was sudden, so that in fewe dayes, betwixt them they had equallie diuided both the men and munition, of that their now infortunate countrey. And forceably assailing one another, prodigally consumed the precious blood of their owne countrey men, who were not so blessed afore in their peaceful reigne, as they are cursed now in their vntimely rage. Which the graue Senatours of that almost dispeopled Countrey, diligently foreseeing, made of themselves such meanes to leuie men, and prouide munition, as the remnant of their already gathered forces would afford. Intending either to make some accorde betwixt them againe, or else to subuert them both,

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both, whose furies were so fierce, that there was almost no hope of any reconciliation left betwixt them. Which when they had done, before they would with open alarme proclaim the vnciuill sort of their coming, they sent to them many interchangeable Heraulds, to certifie them of the vrging occasions of their gathered forces, which was in the dutiful defence of their Countrey, to saue as much as in them lay, all, or the most of that their natural blood, which was like in these ciuil tempests of home-bred stormes to be pitifully spilt. But such was the incensed furie of these two unkindly foes, as that neither the leue of their Countrey, the threates of their foes, nor the intreaties of their friends, could refraine them from their resolution of reuenge. So that the Countrey men who were there gathered together, thought it the best course, both for the safetie of themselves, and the after quiet of their Countrey, to ioyne battel with both at once, beeing more in number then both the kings battels, which determination they effectually followed. And alconfusedly without forme rushing together, ioyned their disordered battels, where some laboring for y good of their Countrey, other for the hateful hope of bloody reuenge, til in the ende, the battels of the kings, by reason of their confusion and disorder, were so impouerished, that for feare of further daunger they were both forced to flie.

After the end of which bloodie battel, the Senatours gathering together the bodics of their dead Countrey men, as was their dutie, afforded them honourable burial. And then hauing rid, as they wel hoped, their quiet Countrey of those ciuill dissentions, they againe betooke themselves to their former seueral businesses. Where we must now a while leaue them to their own gouernment til time and their happie stars shal againe reduce

nature of a woman.

reduce into the ciuill forme of a peaceable kingdome.

Old Radulpho after his happie reigne in his quiet graue: Adrianus in the Lions den: Berea amongst the sauage Wandettes at the sea side : Perseus after the slaughter of his men fled for succour to the mountains: Theseus escaping toward the plaine forrest, as intending to depart his Countrey: and their wiues by the iust censure of the new iudging Senate, banished, to finde out the seuerall husbands. Whom we must leaue to their better fortunes, til time and our idle houres shal againe bring them al to their former estate.

FINIS.

